

Soliloquy

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Summary: Everyone listens to the voices in their head. Selfdoubt, apathy, optimism and pessimism... which is strongest?

***Chapter 1*: Soliloquy**

A dull thump, as his feet thumped across the cold aerie floor. One final flight of stairs, and they'd all be up to the beacon. The Mars Star hummed, glowing with intense heat, crying to be thrust into the pit. Isaac watched Mia walk before him, up one step, then another, and another. He paused before the first step. Mia looked back at him curiously. The voices in his head started up again.

So, Mars Lighthouse, freezing cold, fate of the world... are you scared, Isaac?

'Who the heck wouldn't be?'

Will you run?

'I... don't know...'

You're a small-town boy. Do you even have a place here?

'Probably not.'

Who cares if he's here or not? He's gonna live or die, anyway. Doesn't matter.

Shut up, Apathy.

Ooh, the almighty Self-Doubt is picking on old, reliable Apathy. Well, you know what? I don't care.

I didn't see that coming... I think.

'Look, would you both shut up? I'm kinda about to jump into a very difficult battle here. I hate it when I have these thoughts in battle.'

Technically you aren't in battle yet. Not that I care.

'Whatever.'

And you're scared. You probably can't even win. Isn't it just kind of useless?

'So what do you want me to do? Run?'

Would that make you happy?

Great, Optimism has shown up. It's really hard to indulge in self-doubt when you're around.

Just doing my job.

Whatever.

'Look, I'd really like to focus right now. Is there a point you guys want to make, or can I get back to what's important?'

"What's important?" You mean ogling Mia?

'...aren't you supposed to be Apathy, not Sarcasm?'

What do I care?

'...that's getting really old.'

I don't ca-

'I get the point!'

At least if you die, you won't have to listen to him.

'How reassuring.'

Look, let me put it this way, for you, Isaac.

'Don't you mean, "for us?" Y'know, as you're... in my head, and all...'

Don't get smart with me. ...you. Whatever.

That's my line.

'Shut up.'

Look, here's the point: The world is pretty much screwed anyway. Even if you light the beacon, alchemy will probably still screw up the world, whether it's here or not. So the best thing to do would be to just take Mia away now and run for it.

'...the heck? Self-doubt came up with a definite plan that isn't... self-doubting?'

Then again, even if you run away with Mia, you're screwed anyway. May as well give up.

'Give up...? You want me to just run away...?'

Think of all the questions that will remain once you're done.

Let's not, it's so depressing...

You wouldn't exist if it weren't for Depression, Optimism.

You're Apathy, not Logical Thought, and remember that.

What if you destroy the world? What if the ground shakes like at Venus Lighthouse and someone dies from falling off? What if it's Mia that falls off? And even if everything goes well, what about your future? What if Mia rejects you? What if you reject her? What if-

'What if... everything falls apart...?'

Better to run than to fail...

...just give it up, Self Doubt.

Eh?

Isaac, don't you dare quit, don't you dare turn around, and don't you dare do anything other than stand beside Mia.

'Why bother? He's right, there'll always be questions and-'

Exactly. There will always be questions. There will always be problems, and there will always be something in your way.

'So why-'

Go on? Because all running away does is get rid of a few questions. And just because something can make questions go away for a little while, it doesn't mean that it's an answer. It's just escapism.

'Escapism...?'

But... if he fails...

I think you meant to say, when he doesn't.

'Right. ...I won't.'

Strangely, I still couldn't care less.

Somehow...

...we saw that coming.

"Isaac? Are you coming?" Mia asked, looked backwards at the young man. His eyes traveled to meet hers, and then his feet followed, taking him up to wait beside her, linking his arm through hers and walking her up the final steps to the beacon.

"Always, love."